

Message Text

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ACTION AGR-08

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAGR, IT

SUBJECT: MY CALL ON AGMIN MARCORA

DEPARTMENT PASS AGRICULTURE-FAS

1. GIOVANNI MARCORA, NEW MINISTER AGRICULTURE, WHOM I MET ON COURTESY CALL TODAY, GIVES IMPRESSION FORCEFULNESS AND FRIENDLY ATTITUDE TO U.S. AND LIVES UP TO THE FAVORABLE EVALUATION THAT FANFANI GAVE ME RECENTLY.

2. HE IS FIRST OF FOUR AGRICULTURAL MINISTERS IN OFFICE SINCE MY ARRIVAL THAT HAS AGRICULTURAL BACKGROUND. MARCORA HAS LIVESTOCK FARM, MOSTLY DAIRY, IN PARMA. (INCIDENTALLY HE INDICATED GREAT APPRECIATION OF QUALITY OF U.S. HOLSTEIN FRIESIAN DAIRY CATTLE HE PURCHASED FROM U.S. SOME YEARS AGO, AS WELL AS OF SIZE, IMPORTANCE AND EFFICIENCY OF U.S. AGRICULTURE IN GENERAL.)

3. IN EXPECT HE WILL MAKE STRONG EFFORTS GET FAVORABLE TREATMENT OF AGRICULTURAL ITEMS IMPORTANT TO ITALIAN AGRICULTURE IN HIS EC NEGOTIATIONS. IN RESPONSE TO MY QUESTIONS RE LIKELY OUTCOME CAP PRICE NEGOTIATIONS, HE EXPRESSED CONCERN AT EXTENT INTRA-EC

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POLITICAL INFIGHTING AND OBSERVED THAT GOOD US-EC RELATIONS ARE

FUNDAMENTAL TO FUTURE SECCES EC.

4. MARCORA WAS UNAWARE OF OUR PREVIOUS EFFORTS GET LOWER DUTY FOR ORANGES IN LATE SPRING AND OF SUNKIST'S WILLINGNESS SHARE ITS TECHNICAL AND MARKETING EXPERTISE IN JOINT OPERATION, IF LOWER EC DUTY COULD BE OBTAINED. I TOLD HIM THAT SUCH A JOINT EFFORT, WHICH WOULD INCLUDE IMPORTS OF U.S. FROZEN JUICE FOR BLENDING WITH LOWER QUALITY ITALIAN JUICE, COULD OPEN POSSIBILITY SUBSTANTIAL SALES IN E.C. TO OVERALL BENEFIT ITALIAN BALANCE OF PAYMENTS. MINISTER INDICATED WOULD GIVE CAREFUL STUDY ANY FUTURE U.S. PROPOSAL.

5. I BELIEVE THIS MAY OPEN OPPORTUNITY GET ITALIANS OFF DEAD CENTER ON THIS PROBLEM AND HOPE U.S. DEPARTMENT AGRICULTURE WILL RE-EXAMINE SITUATION WITH SUNKIST AND ADVISE NEXT STEPS RECOMMENDED. VOLPE

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